

not receiving the kind of health care that they deserve and not being appreciated in the way they should be appreciated, I think we can do better things with that money to be able to make sure that we honor them.

I thank my colleague for allowing me to be here tonight. I look forward to the Congressional Black Caucus continuing to come to the floor to share with the American people about what is going on under the dome here in Washington D.C.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for his leadership. The gentleman has been here for less than 2 years now, but has made a tremendous impact on so many of us. We are very proud of his leadership.

As we close, Mr. Speaker, I assume we have about a minute, let me just say this, that the gentleman did make a point that I want to reemphasize. We want to make sure we have a strong military. But young people, if they are listening to what we are saying and they are informed, a lot of times young people will go into the military, they are looking forward, they have a vision of their future, and they want to serve this country, they want to give it their best; but they also look beyond their service. They are saying what benefits will come to me? What benefits will come to my family? So I think probably one of the best recruiting tools for a strong military is for us to keep our commitment.

When they see their grandfathers doing what the gentleman just said, waiting in long lines for their relatives and friends, that does not say very much for us.

So I think as we are in this war and as we stand up for our soldiers, we must also stand up for our veterans.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The gentleman is 110 percent right. Veterans should not get the voice mail when they call the VA. They should get the person that is going to treat them the way that they should be treated and make sure they are scheduled for whatever appointment they need in a reasonable time and not wait 3 or 4 months just to see an optometrist.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I think it is very appropriate that we end on that note, Mr. Speaker, a note about the people we just spent a day saluting and letting them know how much we love them; but now it is not only time to salute them and tell them that we love them but it is also time to make sure that we do for them as they have been promised.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise as Member and First Vice Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to warn our great nation. The current Administration—one that has made promises, one that has amassed tremendous debt, and one that has gotten us into a war and subsequent occupation that can be characterized as a financial abyss has put government agencies on notice this month that if reelected, the 2006 budget may include cuts for virtually all agencies in charge of do-

mestic programs, including education and homeland security.

In the Administration's "accidental" memorandum proposing potential budget cuts fails to realize that when cuts are made across the board, vulnerabilities are created in each area, and we then have a homeland security problem.

A Washington Post article (May 27, 2004, Page A01) entitled "2006 Cuts in Domestic Spending on Table," a budget analyst at the conservative Heritage Foundation tried to rationalize the Administration's proposed 2006 cuts in stating, "I think the public is ready for spending cuts . . . not only does the public understand [sic] there's a whole lot of waste in the federal budget. However, the public is ready to make sacrifices during the war on terror." There is something troubling about that statement, something that is endemic to the entire Administration. The public's supposed willingness to sacrifice is obviously in respect of the need to conserve and enhance our domestic homeland security policy. Why on earth would the public not want to spend more money on improved homeland security? National Institutes of Health (NIH) spending would be cut 2.1% in 2006, to \$28 billion, after a \$764 million increase for 2005 that brought the NIH budget to \$28.6 billion. We won't be worrying about improving our biodefense programs, apparently.

This is good news, bad news situation. The good news is that President Bush has hurt his chances of being elected again by letting people know that, if he is reelected, his budget for 2006 will include spending cuts for virtually all agencies in charge of domestic programs, including education, homeland security and others that the President backed in his campaign year. That will hurt his chances of being reelected. The bad news is that if he is reelected, his budget for 2006 will include spending cuts for virtually all agencies in charge of domestic programs, including education, homeland security and others that the President backed in his campaign year.

J.T. Young, a spokesman for the White House Office of Management and Budget, said in a memo that, "Agencies have asked for this sort of direction." Maybe that is true, but the rest of us didn't ask for such a negative policy. We need domestic programs, including education, homeland security, and others that the President backed in his campaign year.

The funding levels referred to in the memo would be a tiny slice out of the federal budget—\$2.3 billion, or 0.56 percent, out of the \$412.7 billion requested for fiscal 2005 for domestic programs and homeland security that is subject to Congress's annual discretion. It will not offset the enormous expense of the war in Iraq, an expense that we cannot even begin to estimate. But it will hurt the American people. We depend on these programs.

I am amazed by some of the items on his chopping block: The Education Department; a nutrition program for women, infants and children; Head Start; and homeownership, job-training, medical research and science programs all face cuts in 2006. This is very difficult to understand.

It also bothers me that the administration may have to make cuts in key government services to pay for the tax cuts that have gone to the wealthy members of our society. But with the budget deficit exceeding \$400 billion

this year, tough and painful cuts are unavoidable, said Brian M. Riedl, a budget analyst at the conservative Heritage Foundation, and this may be true. As I have said in the area of immigration law, we need to work together to solve our problems. If we have to cut expenses, the decision on what should be cut needs to be made on a bipartisan basis.

Another approach to offsetting our deficit would make more sense to me. We presently have between 8 and 14 million undocumented aliens living in the shadows of our society. If we brought them out of the shadows and made it possible for them to obtain good employment, they could contribute to our ability to pay off the deficit with the income taxes that they would pay.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving us time to discuss these important issues.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. BERKLEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today before 5:00 p.m. on account of a death in the family.

Mr. BALLANCE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and June 3 on account of personal reasons.

Mrs. EMERSON (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and June 3 on account of attending daughter Katharine's graduation from Washington and Lee University.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MCDERMOTT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HINCHEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MORAN of Kansas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PENCE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GILCHREST, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KLINE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BONNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TERRY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today and June 3.